

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF FRANCISCO
ORTIZ AS HE RECEIVES THE 2006
DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY
SERVICE AWARD

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, today, in my hometown of New Haven, Connecticut, friends, family and colleagues will gather to pay tribute to one of our community's most outstanding citizens and a dear friend of mine. I am proud to stand today and join the Connecticut Anti-Defamation League as they honor New Haven Police Chief Francisco Ortiz, Jr. with the 2006 Distinguished Community Service Award.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to those who dedicate themselves to public service, especially those who serve as law enforcement officials. These brave men and women face dangers and challenges that few of us can imagine. Over twenty-five years ago, Francisco (Cisco) Ortiz joined the New Haven Police Department and, over his career, worked his way through the ranks. In his time with the department he has been assigned to every major unit in the Department serving with both integrity and distinction. There were very few that were surprised when he was selected as Chief of the Department—a role in which he has served for the last several years.

Even more inspiring than his leadership in the Department has been the diversity of roles he has taken on in the community. Volunteer, board member, department liaison—Chief Ortiz has been a strong and vocal advocate for the families and residents of New Haven. Working with such organizations as the Community Consultation Center, Easter Seals/Goodwill Industries, and the New Haven Labor Day Road Race, Chief Ortiz has demonstrated a unique compassion and concern for our community and his efforts have touched the lives of many. Chief Ortiz is also a member of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, the Connecticut Puerto Rican Parade Committee, and the Connecticut Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run. He is also a Senior Fellow and one of the founders of the Yale Child Study Center's Development/Community Policing Program—a program which I have been proud to be a part of. His active participation in our community as a professional, volunteer, and advocate has made all the difference.

Each year, the Connecticut Anti-Defamation League presents the Distinguished Community Service Award to an outstanding leader in the community, recognizing their unique commitment and dedication. Chief Ortiz is a remarkable reflection of the true spirit of community service. I am proud to stand today to join his family, friends, and the many colleagues and community members who have gathered this evening to extend my heart-felt congratulations to my dear friend, Chief Francisco (Cisco) Ortiz, Jr. as he is honored with this very special award. It is a fitting tribute to his many years of service to our community and his continued dedication to improving the quality of life for others.

CONGRATULATING THE WASH-
INGTON HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE
OLYMPIAD TEAM

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to rise to congratulate the students of the Washington High School Science Olympiad Team for winning the North Carolina State Science Olympiad. Competing against 250 teams from around the state, the young men and women from Washington defeated some of the premier science and math high schools in the State.

Washington High School is becoming known in North Carolina for its excellence in science education. This year's victory represents the second straight year Washington High School has been named North Carolina's top team and the third time in the last four years.

This week they will travel to Bloomington, Indiana, to compete in the National Science Olympiad against equally capable schools from around the Nation. I am confident that the students of Washington High School will demonstrate their expertise again in competing to the best of their abilities with some of the best funded specialty schools in the country.

The students and faculty of Washington High School continue to show they can achieve great things with what little they are given, and it is my hope that my colleagues will agree that with the proper means, these students can achieve anything. Again, I congratulate the students of Washington High School for their great achievements and wish them the best of luck on May 17. We are very proud of them.

“THE ENDANGERED LAND OF RENTER-WORLD”

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, one of the most effective advocates for housing for people of moderate and low income to have served recently in our federal government is Nicolas P. Retsinas. Mr. Retsinas now directs the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, and he recently published an extremely important and cogent article in the Boston Globe, on May 5. One of the great mistakes that is made by people who talk about housing policy is to talk as if we are concerned only with promoting homeownership. Homeownership is a very important thing, and increasing the number of people who enjoy it is a desirable goal. But it is also the case that tens of millions of Americans for a variety of reasons, primarily economic, are unlikely ever to be homeowners, and if we do not pay attention to the need for a good stock of affordable rental housing, we will be condemning large numbers of our fellow citizens to substandard lives in many ways. Under the current Administration, as Mr. Retsinas points out, Federal policy badly neglects the needs of those who must rent.

It is true that a bias in public policy against renters unfortunately predates the Bush Administration, but it is this Administration that has greatly exacerbated it by its assault on the various programs by which we provide rental housing at affordable levels for moderate and low-income people. Using his literary device of talking of “Owner-World,” and “Renter-World,” Mr. Retsinas notes that, “Today parts of Renter-World constitute a desperation sector of America. Poor people, crammed into too-small apartments, struggle to pay for food, rent, transportation, and medical care.”

Mr. Speaker, given Mr. Retsinas' experience in administering housing problems, his great scholarly expertise in this subject, and most of all his compassion and understanding of the needs for rental housing as part of a comprehensive national housing policy, I ask that his important article from the May 5 Boston Globe be printed here.

[From the BOSTON GLOBE, May 5, 2006]

THE ENDANGERED LAND OF RENTER-WORLD

(By Nicholas P. Retsinas)

Welcome to Renter-World, home to more than 34 million households. Renter-World denizens, aka tenants, comprise all ages. Eighty percent of all twentysomething households rent; so do 4 million senior households. Tenants come in all socioeconomic strata: Twenty percent of renters earn more than \$60,000 a year; another 20 percent earn less than \$10,000.

Yet a myopic Uncle Sam barely sees Renter-World.

Instead, Uncle Sam focuses on Owner-World. Owner-World captures the federal tax breaks: The homeownership tax deductions for mortgage interest and property taxes top \$100 billion a year and are rising rapidly.

Owner-World also captures the federal attention: For almost 100 years, starting with a 1918 Department of Labor campaign and continuing through Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal, Bill Clinton's National Homeownership Partnership, and George Bush's Ownership Society, the federal government has been promoting homeownership. Today 69 percent of households own a home—an all-time high.

From Uncle Sam's vantage, that statistic marks success. Homeownership is the American “dream,” the crucial first step on a family's pathway to the middle class. A homeowner amasses equity, so that one day he can own a piece of America. That vested interest spurs involvement in schools, in neighborhoods, in political life. Just as important, the home gives the owner a financial cushion. Even if owners do not reap the windfall of a superheated market, the home can still be a hedge against inflation.

Indeed, we are a nation of immigrants who have marked the exodus with a series of papers: green cards, citizenship, and mortgages. The “American dream” may be a three-bedroom Cape on a tiny lot, but immigrants have come here for that dream.

So Uncle Sam's myopia is understandable. He expects renters to move on—to become owners. That is what they too expect.

Renter-World, however, is in trouble.

Even though we are building new rental units, we are not adding to the net “affordable” (a euphemism for cheap) units. That supply is shrinking. Between 1993 and 2003, we lost 2 million low-rent units from the rental inventory. At the same time, rents are rising, especially for newly constructed units.

Consider the plight of the lowest income renters: 70 percent pay more than half of their income for housing. The National Low Income Coalition could not find one county